

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

La Puerta Originals, Inc.

New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership

La Puerta Originals, Inc. Increases Productivity with Lean

Client Profile:

La Puerta Originals, Inc., founded in 1992, manufactures antique architectural wood materials including ornate old world doors, architectural columns and corbels, gates, shutters, furniture, and cabinetry. The company employs 35 people at its facility in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Situation:

The demand for La Puerta Originals products, especially doors and gates, in the high-end custom home market had grown beyond the capacity of La Puerta. The leadership of the company chose to expand the operation and engaged the New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership (New Mexico MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to assure that the expansion produced the desired increase in productivity, profitability, and efficiency.

Solution:

New Mexico MEP provided training in Lean Manufacturing Principles for La Puerta's production, sales and design staffs. Key employees in the production area created a Value Stream Map (VSM) of the manufacturing process. From the VSM, the team identified a layout for the new equipment and other opportunities for improving the speed of work going through the line. Next, the sales and design staff in conjunction with key employees from manufacturing created an administrative VSM to identify problems in the sales and design process that had negative impacts on manufacturing's ability to deliver products on time. The teams put together action plans to address both the manufacturing and administrative opportunities. The solutions for the manufacturing process resulted in faster time through the line, improved capacity, and the ability to predict and meet delivery dates. The solutions implemented in the sales and design departments have resulted in reduced hassle for the customers, improved information for manufacturing, greater on-time deliveries to customers, improved customer satisfaction, and improved cash flow.

Results:

- * Anticipated sales increase of \$200,000.
- * Reduced lead time from 20 weeks to 8-12 weeks.
- * Improved customer satisfaction.
- * Created 12 new jobs.

Testimonial:

"The focus on flow of information through the sales, design and project management departments and into the shop resulted in better specifications coming into the shop in a timely manner. The increases in efficiencies in sales and project management combined with faster throughput times in the shop have opened up possibilities for more work orders. We look forward to maintaining a continuous

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improvement system in the future."

Melissa Coleman, Owner